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A CONSUMER ROUND TABLE ON GARDENING

MARCH 8, 1947

1. SOUND:

CASH REGISTER RINGS TWICE . . . MONEY IN TILL

2. ANNCR:

It's CONSUMER TIME

3. SOUND:

CASH REGISTER . . . CLOSE DRAWER

4. ANNCR:

During the next fifteen minutes the National Broadcasting

Company and its affiliated independent stations make their

facilities available for the presentation of CONSUMER TIME

by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Today, in the studio

we have three gardeners: M. L. Wilson, Director of Extension

Service; Ernie Moore, in charge of Information for

Agricultural Researsh; and Virginia Tatum, who will hold up

the nutrition end of this panel. Ernie Moore, we'd like

you to start this garden ball rolling by telling us the

objectives of this year's garden program.

5. MOORE:

Well, _____, during the past two years, emphasis has shifted from intensive production to gardening for fun, community face-lifting, and better nutrition. This means splitting our attention between roses and radishes . . . giving equal care to snapbeans and snapdragons. My own personal feeling is that we should concentrate on those foods we know how to grow well . . .

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6. TATUM:

And these, as luck would have it, Ernie, usually turn out to be the protective foods. These are the fruits and vegetables that reward you with clear eyes, good complexions, sound gums, and good digestion. There are some nutritionists who go so far as to say that liberal use of these protective foods tends to preserve the characteristics of youth . . . and extends the prime of life. Which is to say, if you eat enough of them, these protective foods will do more for the women of America than all the beauty shops laid end to end.

7. MOORE:

I appreciate what our leading nutritionists say, Virginia.

Moreover, I'm delighted with the remarkable dietary

qualities of the leafy world . . . and the happy coincidence

that the protective foods are the very ones that I've

learned to grow best. But I can't keep from harping on the

sheer fun of gardening. I don't mean the therapeutic value

of it. That's another angle . . . one that my friend, "M.L."

will discuss a little later. What I mean is the fun of

growing a mess of peas that has a flavor that you can't

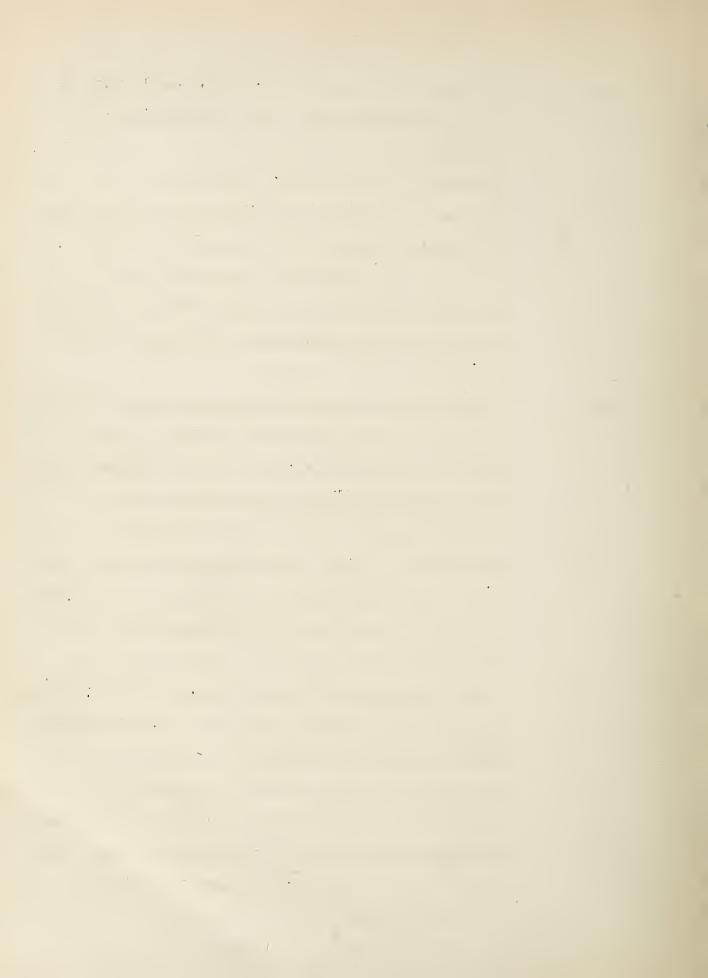
capture anywhere except in your own garden. The thing is....

you did it. You, yourself, with your own rough, blistered

hands, brought these peas out of the ground.

8. ANNCR:

The same goes for corn. Was ever corn more tender and sweeter than the lean, tassled ears you picked out of your own corn patch. Or tomatoes! Can you remember ever buying a tomato that tasted better than the red, juicy, sunbaked fruits hanging from your own vine?



9. TATUM:

And what about those baby cucumbers, no bigger than your little finger . . . or the big fat one that hid under a leaf...and grew bigger and bigger...and it was weeks before you discovered it.

10. MOORE:

That's it! That's the kind of fun I mean!

11. TATUM:

Besides being fun, Ernie, it's educational. We learned a lot about nutrition education during the war. Now we've got to hold on to that knowledge, and make the very most of it. As a nation, we happen to be the best fed people in the world. Even so, there are far too many American families who do not know what a properly balanced diet is.

12. ANNCR:

More food than ever before...the biggest crop in our history.

And still, hidden hungar sits at many of our tables...

uninvited, invisible...but it's there all the same. We're

not hungry...but somewhere along the line, we haven't been

eating the right kind of food. Am I right, Virginia?

13. TATUM:

Right you are _____. And that's where home garden comes in. It helps us get foods like tomatoes, rich in vitamin C...and all the leafy green and yellow vegetables that are full of vitamin A.

14. MOORE:

Moreover, a garden can help you develop a taste for vegetables you never cared for when you had to buy them. Try growing some crinkly-leaved spinach, fresh with the morning dew on it, and see if you don't start eating spinach.

15. TATUM:

By the way, Ernie, what's this I hear about you and okra?

Oh, that! That's the skeleton in my garden closet. We talked about it every week for nearly three years. Tried to prove that you can become very attached to an unfamiliar

food if you give it half a chance.

16. MOORE:

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17. TATUM:

Did you have any luck in your okra operations?

18. MOORE!

After we got through talking about it, and blowing writing it up, people started/in from as far north as Minnesota, saying...now that we've planted the stuff, and have trunks full of it, WHAT do we do with it?

19. TATUM:

What DO you do with it, Ernie?

20. MOORE:

well, when the pod gets as big as your thumb. no bigger...

you seperate it from the plant. But be sure to leave the

stem end on, Virginia, so that all the gummy stuff inside the

pod stays put. (FADING OUT GRADUALLY) Put these tender

okra pods in salted, boiling water...

21. ANNCR:

And while Miss Tatum and Mr. Moore are purring over okra, let's turn to another facet of gardening. The less obvious one. The reward to the gardener's nervous system, and his emotions. More than ever before, there is need for peace of mind. There are many people who believe that contact with the out-of-doors...a nearness to sun and soil and growing plants can give us the inner serenity we so desperately need. This is something that M. L. Wilson of Extension Service would like to tell our listeners on CONSUMER TIME.

22. WILSON:

The wonderful thing about gardening is that anybody can do it...the young and the old, ______. The main requisite is patience. You've got to gear yourself to nature's pace. There's no going any faster. But once you get the tempo and hang of it, there are certain intangible and spiritual values that will develop from your contact with organic life. Then you agree with the English essayist, Bacon, that a

23. ANNCR:

garden is the purest of human pleasures, and gives refreshment

to the spirit of man?

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24. WILSON:

But while it refreshes the spirits, it plays havoc with the muscles. A gardener discovers muscles that he never knew existed. And they all start aching at once. Basically, gardening is a mixture of muscle and mind, harnessed to an interest that extends from March to November. It finds its awakening in the winter time when you leaf through the seed catalogues, and dream about the kind of plants you want to grow. Comes March, and it's time to turn the drowsy, cold ground up. Then summer, with its sweet murmurous hours. You watch the rows for the first small, tender sprouts. It puts kinks in your back alright, and blisters on your hands. But once you're caught in the web of seeds and soil and spades and sunshine...there's no respite for you. You're caught for good. You're a gardener from then out.

25. ANNCR:

You might not have a shirt to your name...but you're a happy man. Is that the score, "M.L"?

26. WILSON:

And a healthy man, besides, I sincerely feel that the field of horticultural science has a tremendous contribution to make. I believe that this science is needed if we intend to live a full, rich life that will fit into a civilized society. Then you believe, "M.L", that we city people should be more suburban and weave into our lives the various aspects of

27. AMNCR;

28, WILSON: Not only the vegetable side, but flowers, and lawn and ornamentals, as well.

gardening...

29. ANMCR:

The rebirth of gardening during the war contributed a great deal to the current, growing interest.

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30. WILSON:

The war provided the impetus. Now we've got to keep the interest growing apace. Both city and suburban people should be given every opportunity to learn and develop garden skills.

31. ANNCR:

Do you think, "M.L.", that this can be achieved by making the services of county extension agents available to city folks?

32. WILSON:

I think the time is close when we'll have horticultural agents to work with people in the cities....just the way county agents work with the rural population.

33. ANNCR:

Another point, "M.L." Would you tell us a little about the physical and mental improvement that gardening contributes to man's well-being.

34. WILSON:

I agree with Dr. Frederick Moersch of the Mayo Clinic who thinks that one develops a philosophy of tranquility in a world of fresh air and sunshine. That hard garden work gives tremendous pleasure. . .and the resulting fatigue is a tonic. The trouble is . . . we sit at our desks during the long sunny:days. . . or stand in assembly lines. . .or we're tied to a kitchen sink. My advice is . . . set aside some of these precious sunny hours for being out-of-doors, planting, and weeding, and bending over a hoe.

35. AMNCR:

I can't help but think of that sad chap in Millet's (MILLAY'S) picture, bending over a hoe. . .tired and old. . .without hope, without joy.

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36. WILSOM:

The men and women I see with hoes aren't chained to the earth. They're digging around their gardens. They're free and happy and tired. But it's a healthy, happy tiredness. Nothing that a good rub-down won't ease. They're creating something with their hands and their minds, and consuming the results of this creative energy.

37. ANNCR:

Speaking of creating and consuming, "M.L.", I think we ought to see how our okra eaters are making out. . .

38. MOORE:

(COMING OUT OF FADE). then you pick the pod up by the stem end and pop it off in one bite. Leaving the stem behind. That's the way we keep score in our family. We line up the stems, one, two, three, four, five. . .

39. TATUM:

(LAUGHING) I can see that you <u>really garden</u> for the joy of it, Ernie Moore. Do you have any special blueprint that you stick to?

40. MOORE:

Well, I try not to violate too many of the rules. In the beginning, and that was a long time ago, I used to draw diagrams of what to put when. . .and where.

41. TATUM:

And now?

42. MOORE:

Now I know what goes in when and where. I even put some things in before it's time. . .just to see how they manage.

43. TATUM:

Could you give us a row-by-row account of how you keep your garden growing all the time.

44. MOORE:

That's easy. When the first robin comes hopping around the house, I figure it's time to put the early crops in . . .if the ground isn't too hard to work.

45. TATUM:

By early crops you mean peas and turnips and spinach and kale, and beets. . .

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- 46. MOORE: And all the stuff you toss in a salad...radishes, onions, cabbage, and lettuce. These can be planted when it's quite cold.
- 47. TATUM: What gets planted when the white dogwood blossoms begin to slant through the woods, Ernie?
- 48. MOORE: It should be warm by then...which makes it time for carrots and snapbeans and corn.
- 49. TATUM: And when the danger of frost is completely over...then what does your garden grow?
- 50. MOORE: Tomatoes, green peppers, cucumbers, squash, lima beans and eggplant.
- 51. TATUM: And then?
- 52. MOORE: For the fall and early winter crop, Virginia, there's a repeat performance of kale, radishes, onions, cabbage and lettuce.
- 53. TATUM: This sequence has a sequel, Ernie. When the winds are howling like mad, and winter gathers her white skirt around her, you can find the fruits of summer on your pantry shelves, row after row of beautiful canned things.
- 54. TATUM: Something else I wanted to ask you about before it slips away. What's this I hear about a nick-name that starts with "C".
- 55. MOORE: (LAUGHING) Oh, that stands for "Composte". I'm a great one for organic matter. Regardless of what kind of soil you have, you can always make it better by folding in some organic matter. That's when you get extra good results.
- 56. TATUM: It really turns the trick, eh?

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57. MOORE:

I tried a little experiment one year. I planted two rows of tomatoes. One row I treated with composte. The other row...no composte. Just made a hole; planted the tomato plant and padded soil around it.

58. TATUM:

With twice as many tomatoes appearing in the composte row ...

59. MOORE:

Say! those are my lines; Virginia.

60. TATUM:

(LAUGHING) Couldn't resist filthing them, "Composte" Moore!

61. SOUND:

(PAUSE)

62. ANNCR:

There's nothing static about a garden; as you can see. It keeps you planning and working from March through November. During the war, we had to stick pretty close to the essential vegetables. Now we can let our fancy roam. Pick up the seed catalogues and see for yourself the improvements that have been made in color, form, vigor of growth. Try the new varieties. Freshen up your garden with them. And while our garden experts are with us, let's ask them about some of the new varieties that the Seedsmen of the Department of Agriculture have perfected at the plant research station in Beltsville, Maryland.

63. MOORE:

64. TATUM:

Virginia, did I hear you murmuring something about number 5?

A cantaloupe...not a perfume, Ernie. And it's a new variety that resists mildew. You know what a bad time cantaloupes have with mildew...that nasty fungus that sends suckers into the canteloupe leaves and destroys them. Without the leaf, the cantaloupe is exposed to the sun...ends up with sun scald, withers and dies. If it doesn't wither, it gets an acute attack of hollow hunger. That's explained by the fact that the leaves are the factories that manufacture the sugar. Which is the reason that melons growing on vines

without leaves are tasteless.

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63. ANNCR: How'd the breeders get this number 5, Virginia?

64. TATUM: By crossing a market melon with an inedible melon from India. It was really perfected for the benefit of the

commercial cantaloupe growers in the Southwest.

65. WILSON: Then there's a new leaf lettuce called Slobolt. It's suited

to all kinds of soil and all manner of climate. It's superior to other leaf lettuce because it withstands warm

summer temperatures.

66. TATUM: How did it get to be called "Slobolt?" "M.L".

67. WILSON: Just that, It's slow to bolt. Bolting means sending up a

seed stalk that produces flowers and seeds. If a lettuce

plant does that, the leaves get bitter, and they're no

longer edible. Now Slobolt, this new lettuce, will go

without bolting twenty to forty days longer than your other

kinds of lettuce.

68. MOORE: And don't forget the Logan snapbean....Aglovely, long green

bean, good both fresh and canned. Disease resistant, too,

and does well under hot, ary conditions.

69. WILSON: And remember, too, that there are eleven new varieties of

other /

snapdragons. And many, many/new flower varieties. The

garden of 1947 is expected to lift the face of the community

in addition to feeding it ... and jacking up. the spirit.

70. TATUM: Beauty, fun and better nutrition...these are the keynotes of

the 1947 garden. So the fellow who says:

71. ANNCR: "I like to grow zucchini because it grows a foot long. I get

a big kick showing these monsters to my neighbors!."

72. MOORE: This citizen has just as much right to his garden as the

homemaker who says:

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73. TATUM:

"A garden gives me a chance to experiment with different cooking methods. There's always an extra row of something, which means I can afford to waste a little without feeling extravagant."

74. ANNCR:

Or the chap who says:

75. MOORE:

"I want dahlias with blooms as big as platters...and rows and rows of zinnias, and flocks of marigolds...."

76. TATUM:

Or the soldier, home from the wars...

77. ANNCR:

"I garden to forget a lot of things I don't want to remember.

It helps give me peace of mind."

78. TATUM:

Or another homemaker who says she likes to transfer the rows of fresh vegetables in her garden to rows of canned vegetables in her pantry.

79. ANNCR:

Which brings us to the very subject of next week's CONSUMER TIME PROGRAM. It's about the millions of American women who don't fiddle all summer long. They dig and plant and gather ...and then take their produce to the community canning center. We'll be hearing from three of these centers next week, and also from the man who is in charge of them...

Paul C. Stark. In the meanwhile, for a free copy of the USDA Bulletin: "Growing Vegetables in Town and City," drop a post card to CONSUMER TIME, Washington 25, D. C...and we'll see that you get one. Remember the address...it's CONSUMER TIME, Washington 25, D. C...and the name of the Booklet "Growing Vegetables in Town and City", So friends, be with us next week for another edition of:

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79. SOUND: CASH REGISTER

80. ANNCR: CONSUMER TIME

81. SOUND: CASH REGISTER ... CLOSE DRAWER

82. ANNCET Today's CONSUMER TIME script, written by Sophia Podolsky, and directed by Frederick Schweikher, is presented by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, through the facilities of the National Broadcasting Company and its affiliated independent stations. It comes to you from Washington, D.C.

This is NBC, the National Broadcasting Company.

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